

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

REPORT

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INFORMATION REPORT

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CONFIDENTIAL

CD NO.

COUNTRY Czechoslovakia

DATE DISTR. 13 MAY 1949

SUBJECT Czechoslovak Efforts to Obtain Sulphur, Raw
Phosphates, Zinc, Pyrites, and Iron Ore

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1. Sulphur

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- a. Czechoslovakia is still experiencing difficulties in obtaining adequate supplies of sulphur.

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- c. It is quite possible that the total of 5,000 tons promised to Czechoslovakia by the Soviet Union forms part of the Soviet allotment under the trade agreement.

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2. Raw Phosphates

- a. Raw phosphate stocks in Czechoslovakia are at present very low.

- b. The Postorna plant at Breclav (S75) and the Dynamit Nobel factory at Bratislava were forced to close at the end of January 1949, but were then reopened to work on stocks borrowed locally. They have, however, now been closed "for repairs".

- c. Total Czechoslovak requirements are around 100,000 tons per annum. For 1949 they have been able to contract for 40,000 tons [redacted] [redacted] At the moment, however, a dock strike [redacted] which has already been going on for 12 days, is postponing arrivals.

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- d. Another source of supply is the USSR, which has promised delivery of 50,000 tons of Kola phosphates. The Czechoslovaks, remembering the rate of Soviet deliveries for 1948, do not hope for more than 50 percent of this figure. In any case, there is no plant in Czechoslovakia which can sinter Kola phosphates without mixing them

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2. In any case, supplies at the disposal of plants remaining open will have been exhausted during the first days of April 1949.

3. Zinc and Pyrites

a. Difficulties over Polish supplies of zinc to Czechoslovakia have not yet been settled. Poland was to deliver raw zinc for rolling in Czechoslovakia. Now, however, the Poles have realized that their own rolling mills are not working to capacity and have, therefore, informed the Czechoslovaks that they are prepared to deliver rolled products only. The Czechoslovaks are dissatisfied with this modification, and it is believed that no final decision has yet been taken as to whether or not to continue with the original agreement.

b. Yugoslav offers of pyrites still amount to only 33 percent of what Czechoslovakia was expecting. This position is unlikely to change until Czechoslovakia ceases to hold up her deliveries of electrical equipment to Yugoslavia.

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4. Iron Ore

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a. Czechoslovakia has now been able to contract [] for the supply of 855,000 tons of iron ore; she needs, however, between 1,200,000 and 1,300,000 tons. For the last two weeks a Metalinex delegation [] negotiate a larger supply. The party includes Director General Axla, Dr. Wiesner, [] is to go [] in search of various ferrous alloys, including ferrochrome, ferromanganese, and ferro-silicon.

b.

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c. The Soviet Union has promised 800,000 tons, with the option of a further 300,000

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- d. Between 100,000 to 150,000 tons of ore is expected from Yugoslavia, mostly Prijedor.
- e. Slovak mines last year produced about 550,000 tons of ore with an iron content of 38 to 40 percent. About half of these mines are equipped with obsolete machinery and are, moreover, nearly worked out. Production costs are about 2.60 Kcs per kilo. To be competitive these should be not more than 1.20 Kcs per kilo.

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